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Bangalore Mirror ON SUNDAY

Happy Republic Day

TEMP Max 30 | Min 15 | Humidity 88% Fog/mist in the morning and mainly clear sky later Sensex 76,190 | Nifty 23,092 | Gold 82,420 | Silver 97,500 | Dollar 86.20 | Euro 90.73 | GBP 107.08

PAGE 4

Animal instinct

BBMP training its officials to ensure animal cruelty cases are dealt with precision, offenders brought to justice

PAGE 7

Meet your greens

Microbial contamination found in 10 of 190 samples of onions, cucumbers, green chillies, brinjals taken from city

Ban has helped curb use of e-cigarettes, but experts warn that addictive practice of vaping has been creeping in, throwing door open to other forms of substance abuse

VAPES ARE SOUR

Doctors note few cases over past 2-3 years, while earlier there were none

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E-cigarettes, promoted as a safer alternative to traditional smoking, have surged in popularity, especially among younger populations. However, behind the allure of these devices lies a growing concern: e-cigarettes may not only pose health risks but could also serve as a gateway to other forms of substance abuse, including illicit drugs, experts warn. Officials said the BBMP, Tobacco Department, has implemented 8 lakh enforcement from April 2024 till now to tackle the rise in e-cigarette use.

In 2024 alone, the central crime branch conducted 10 raids, arrested 14 persons, and seized property worth Rs 3.96 crore. Along with this was witnessed a surge in drug use and confiscation of substances like MDMA, cocaine, and marijuana.

Many adolescents are said to perceive e-cigarettes as non-addictive and harmless, fostering a mindset that encourages experimentation during this formative stage.

Health risks

Dr Venkata Lakshmi Narasimha, Assistant Professor, Centre for Addiction Medicine, Department of Psychiatry, explains that during adolescence, a phase of curiosity and experimentation, many try e-cigarettes, which can lead to gradual progression towards other substances, including drugs. This trend is particularly alarming in countries where e-cigarettes are easily accessible. In India, where e-cigarettes are banned, the pattern of use is less documented. However, some individuals still acquire them, often through international travel, and continue using them locally. This highlights the need for greater vigilance and awareness about their risks, he said.

Dr Narasimha adds that a significant concern is the high

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4 »

"According to reports, e-cigarette use is particularly high among youth. However, no one openly admits to using them, and surveys have not yielded promising results

—Dr Kumar, BBMP official

FELL PLAN RIGHT ON TRACK

Overlooking 500+ objections to axing proposal for suburban rail project, plan to remove 1,988 trees okayed

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Despite stiff opposition from hundreds of citizens, Bengaluru's Tree Expert Committee has permitted Karnataka Rail Infrastructure Development Company Limited (K-RIDE) to axe nearly 2,000 trees for Corridor 4 of the Suburban Rail Project.

K-RIDE has got a nod to remove 1,988 trees from Ambedkarnagar to Muddenahalli Line Cross. This is despite more than 500 objections filed by citizens in response to a public notice put by the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) in October 2023.

Most of the objections filed by citizens are regarding the felling of hundreds of trees as proposed in the public notice. Through their objections, citizens have also underlined that K-RIDE has not completed the environmental and social impact studies necessary to understand the impact of the project. Bengalureans also requested that considering the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6 »

01 Satirical play

Woven with humour and satire, 'Kranthi Banthu #Kranthi' by team Kalavilasi offers ample entertainment while provoking thought. The play has been adapted to the present times from P Lankesh's original 'Kranthi Banthu Kranthi,' first published in 1971. **Where: Ranga Shankara; When: January 28, 7:30 pm**

02 Puppetry act

Based on a number of Indo-German folk tales, the play 'Tila' is about a young trickster, Tila, who always thinks he is a grain of Til (Sesame) cleverer than others. The play, using magical realism, reveals a series of witty, humorous episodes from his life. **Where: Ranga Shankara; When: January 26, 3:30 pm & 6 pm**

03 Healing session

Mindful Moves: Movement workshop by Sreya Ridhiban offers dance movement therapy that focusses on mind-body connection & trauma healing. Each session incorporates sound healing, card pulling & somatic practices, delivering a holistic approach to physical & mental well-being. **Where: Atta Galatta, Indiranagar; When: January 26, 3 pm**

04 Shop on

Craft India Exhibition features a stunning array of colourful and diverse clothing & showcases an impressive collection of winter and summer apparel. Highlights include intricately embroidered garments, Punjabi suits, matching accessories, cotton sarees, jubbas, pyjamas, cosmetics, & more. **Where: Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath; When: Until February 2**

UNMASK: Amazing stories, powerful performances take centre stage on Day 2

A Celebration of Performing Arts in Bengaluru

With unbridled enthusiasm, thousands of theatre enthusiasts gathered at St John's Auditorium, Koramangala, on Saturday for the second day of 'Unmask: A-Fair with Theatre'—a three-day celebration of the performing arts. Curated by Ventures Theatre and hosted by E-Blitz Creations in association with Vijay Karnataka and Bangalore Mirror, the festival brought together 300 artists, over 30 plays, and a medley of performances, showcasing the enchanting magic of theatre in all its forms. In addition to a vibrant array of artistic performances, the audience was treated to the traditional spectacle of Yakshagana and the captivating plays of the day, 'Autobiography and Baaghi Albele.'

"It's such a blast! We are absolutely thrilled to have Bengalureans as our first audience for this performance. The energy and enthusiasm from the crowd were incredible, and it was heartwarming to see them enjoy it so much today. After two months of intense practice and preparation, seeing such a positive response from Bengaluru has made this experience unforgettable. We're so grateful to this city for embracing our work with such joy!" said Suchitra Pillai, a well-known actress.

Mahesh Elkunchwar's 'Autobiography'

The Primetime Theatre Company's latest production, Autobiography, by acclaimed Marathi playwright Mahesh Elkunchwar and directed by Lillete Dubey, premiered in Bengaluru. The play revolves around Anantrao Rajadhyaksha, an aging yet charismatic writer, who narrates his life story to Pradnya, a PhD researcher.

Their dialogue unveils a controversial book Rajadhyaksha authored, exposing his tangled relationships—his tumultuous marriage, a fleeting affair, and critiques of his contemporaries. Through flashbacks and conflicting perspectives, the play explores truth, perception, and human complexities, leaving audiences captivated.

Atul Kumar's 'Baaghi Albele'

Atul Kumar's Baaghi Albele, a highly anticipated production, debuted in Bengaluru, blending comic absurdity with stark realities. Set against the backdrop of bans, censorship, and crackdowns on artists, the play navigates the trials of Johnny and Minnie Makhija, celebrated actors from Ludhiana, whose world unravels after a soldier disrupts their Hamlet performance. Unbeknownst to Johnny, the soldier, Sukhi secretly meets Minnie backstage. Events escalate as the government bans theatres, forcing artists into hiding. Ransacked and on the run, Johnny impersonates others in a desperate bid for escape. Kumar's direction masterfully intertwines humour and poignant commentary, offering an unforgettable theatrical experience.

Overall, with these amazing performances and high-energy crowd, Day 2 of the mega theatre event ended on a bright note.

Tomatoes become dirt-cheap, coconut prices skyrocket

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Tomatoes, which recently were sold at prices of over ₹100 per kilogram in the city, are now being sold for less than ₹10 per kilogram. While the sharp decline has brought cheer to consumers, it has left farmers in despair. Despite investing heavily in cultivation and safeguarding crops against pests and diseases, farmers are struggling to recover even their basic production costs now. The steep fall in market rates has amplified their financial distress, raising concerns about the sustainability of tomato farming.

In rural markets, a 24 kg box of tomatoes is being sold for ₹120–₹150. On a per-quintal basis, the price ranges from ₹250 to ₹750. Meanwhile, in retail markets, customers are purchasing tomatoes at just ₹10 per kilogram, further compounding the farmers' woes. Danayya Hiremath, a farmer from Kalaburagi district, said, "I cultivated tomatoes on one acre of land. When I planted the crop, the market price was ₹900 per can, but now it has dropped to just ₹100. I can't even recover the money I've invested in production."

With local market prices crashing, many farmers are transporting their produce to nearby cities like Hyderabad, Mumbai, and Pune in hopes of fetching slightly better prices. However, the delay in harvesting or selling is causing tomatoes to rot in the fields, forcing farmers to either delay the harvest or face losses from spoiled produce. Hence, farmers are urging authorities to intervene and provide minimum support prices or financial relief to help them recover from the current crisis.

...Meanwhile, mature coconuts become pricier

On the other hand, the price of a single mature coconut has risen from ₹40 to ₹60, delivering a financial shock to consumers. Notably, the scorching heat of last summer led people to quench their thirst with tender coconut water, even at double the usual price. Despite the steep rates, customers did not hesitate, prompting coconut farmers to reap the benefits by prioritising tender coconuts over mature ones. The surge in demand for tender coconuts last season has now resulted in a reduced yield of mature coconuts entering the market.

For example, Tiptur (Tumakuru district), a major hub for coconuts, has seen a significant rise in demand for tender coconuts. Around 65% of the coconuts here are harvested early for tender coconut sales, leaving fewer mature coconuts in the market. This scarcity has pushed up prices, making buyers hesitant. According to Basavanneppa, a wholesale coconut trader, the price may surge further in months to come.

"Hotels, which rely heavily on coconuts for cooking, are grappling with price hikes, and households, too, are struggling to afford the rising costs. The price increase has led to adjustments in recipes, with sambar often replacing coconut-based chutneys in many eateries," Raghavendra D, a hotelier, said. "It's becoming difficult to buy coconuts in the market. Even if they're available, the prices are too high for regular use in cooking," said Shreya K, a homemaker.

Ex-Bigg Boss contestant arrested

Former Bigg Boss contestant Jagdish has been arrested along with his gunman for an illegal firing incident. The incident took place on Friday in Kodigehalli when Jagdish's gunman fired shots in the air during a scuffle.

A complaint was filed by a man named Tejas at the Kodigehalli police station, leading to the arrest. The police discovered that the weapon used by the gunman was licenced only for use in Uttar Pradesh and not valid in Karnataka, prompting further legal action.

This arrest follows a recent viral video where Jagdish was seen being attacked by a group of miscreants. Police have seized the weapon. **–BMB**

Snooping repairman blackmails woman

In a shocking incident in CK Palya, Bannerghatta, a geyser repairman named Murali took advantage of his professional access to invade the privacy of a household. Under the pretense of repairing a geyser, Murali secretly installed a hidden camera in the bathroom, unbeknownst to the residents.

Unaware of the camera, the woman continued her routine, only to later become a victim of blackmail. Using recorded footage, Murali has been extorting the woman for the past year.

Out of fear and shame, the woman initially remained silent. However, unable to endure the harassment any longer, she confided in her neighbours. The locals intervened, caught Murali, and ensured he was handed over to the police. **–BMB**

Enjoy flower show, keep Lal Bagh neat

As the city prepares to celebrate the Republic Day at the iconic Lal Bagh Flower Show, the BBMP has urged visitors to make a conscious effort to avoid single-use plastics and contribute to preserving the beauty of the garden.

Officials have stressed that citizens carry reusable bags, water bottles, and avoid plastic straws.

In addition to reducing plastic waste, keeping the area clean is a collective effort, said junior health inspector Asha MP. "Visitors are encouraged to dispose of waste responsibly by using the designated bins," she said. **–BMB**

Car deal is raw deal

Couple loses ₹6 lakh in fake note fraud

Fake Rs 500 notes used to dupe couple

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Man replaces real notes with counterfeit ones, but keeps genuine notes on top to dupe couple who had got in touch with him regarding a car sale

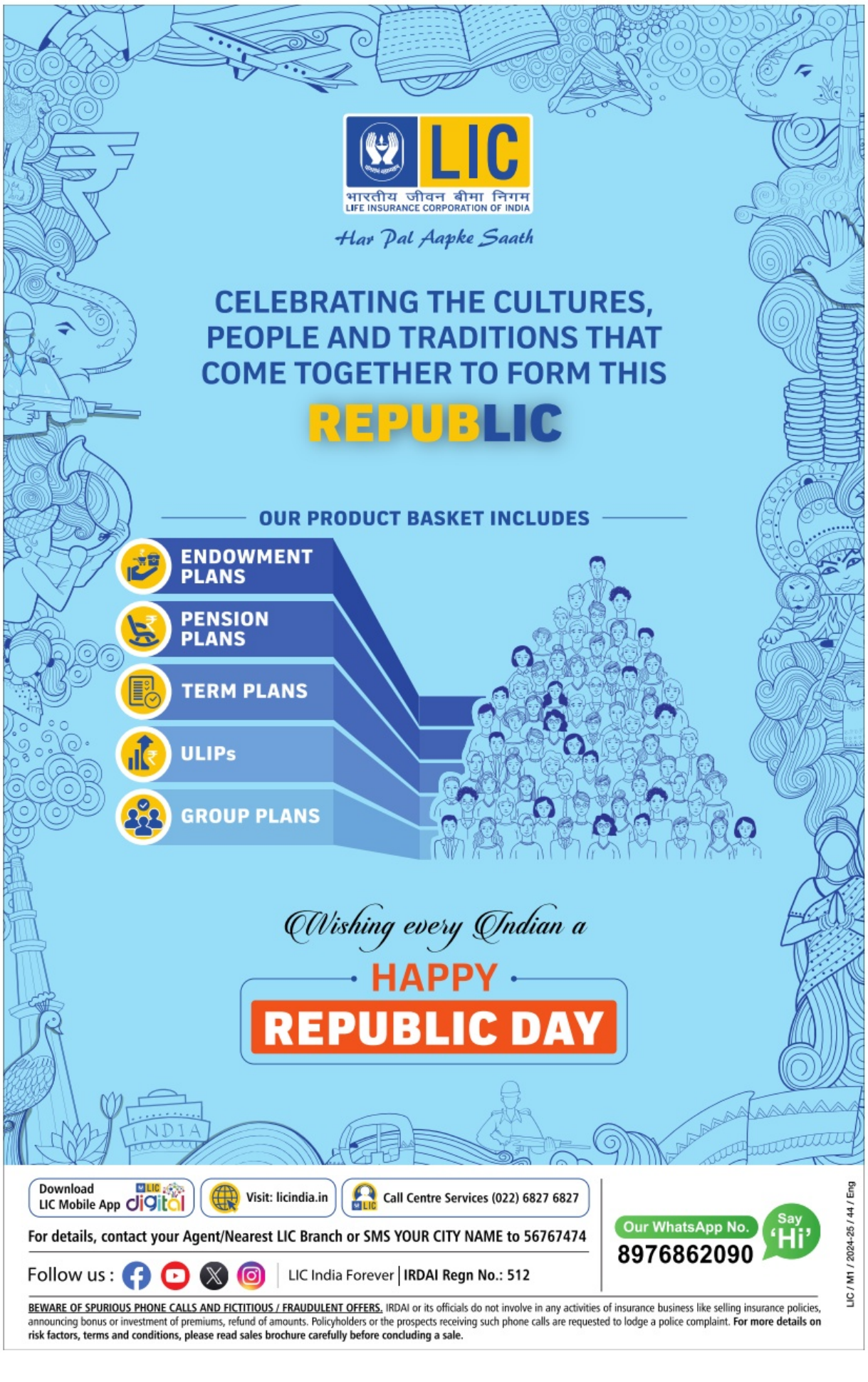
The sophisticated use of counterfeit money left a couple defrauded. The accused handed over bundles of cash with only the topmost notes in each bundle, being real, during a care sale. The accused posed as a trusted car dealer and lured the victims with promises of a quick transaction. The victim Syed Sameen has lodged a complaint with the police, alleging that her husband, Syed Sameer and she were duped of Rs 6 lakh in the fraudulent car sale.

Sameer, who works as a car driver in Kuwait, returned to Bengaluru recently. He was introduced to the alleged fraudster, Rayyan Khushi, who claimed expertise in car sales. During their interaction, Khushi offered to sell a car worth Rs 6 lakh and convinced Sameer to transfer an advance payment of ₹5,40,011 from his brother-in-law Sheikh Asa Bhasha's account to Khushi's account.

On January 19, the complainant and her husband were summoned by Khushi for a meeting at 8.30 pm to finalise the transaction. Khushi assured them the car was ready for handover and requested to see the remaining amount in cash before proceeding further. He reportedly insisted that the cash be shown in person to finalise the deal.

The complainant handed over the money, totaling Rs 6 lakh, in bundles of Rs 500 notes. However, after half an hour, the money had been swapped. When it was later inspected there were 12 bundles of Rs 500 notes, with only one note in each of the six bundles being genuine, while the rest were counterfeit.

When the couple confronted Khushi, he promised to return shortly with the car but vanished without a trace. Subsequent attempts to contact him were futile as his phone went unanswered. Realising they had been duped, the couple approached the police. The complaint included details of the bank transfer and the fake currency scam. The police have registered a case and initiated an investigation to trace the accused.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New training gives BBMP edge in animal protection

Palike instructs staff in animal laws with monthly sessions on legal precision and accountability; sessions include case studies and role-playing to improve case handling

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BBMP has started monthly training sessions to ensure offenders are held accountable

The Animal Husbandry Department of Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) is training its staff in various aspects of animal laws and rights. From veterinary inspectors to assistant directors and livestock development officers, officials are undergoing periodic training on rules mentioned under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (PCA) Act, 1960, and BBMP Act. "The first training session on animal law for our staff was conducted on January 16. Officials were divided into groups and were given case studies to articulate details and figure out ways to approach animal cruelty cases," said Suralkar Vikas Kishore, Special Commissioner of BBMP's Health and Animal Husbandry Department.

According to BBMP, the monthly training session has been started to ensure that animal cruelty cases are dealt with with precision and offenders are brought to justice. "We have noticed that in some recent cases of animal cruelty, we could neither respond in time nor gather evidence. Our officers have also been unsure about sections of the PCA and BBMP Act. Thus we decided to organise the workshop. We will be conducting these training sessions every month until we reach some level of accuracy," added Kishore.

Bangalore Mirror
BBMP to bring animal rights education to schools

BM reported on January 23 about BBMP's efforts to hire agencies for raising awareness about animal rights in schools

BBMP is conducting these sessions with the help of Sahavarthin Animal Welfare Trust, a city-based NGO that works towards animal welfare. "The legal workshop was organised considering some mistakes in the past. The session included case studies and role-playing to help officials draft notices and file FIRs in animal cruelty cases. This is important because in animal cruelty cases, the burden of proof lies with the person who is filing the FIR. Moreover, many resident welfare associations in the city are violating rules and guidelines set by BBMP, in line with PCA and ABC (Animal Birth Control) Rule. These incidents require officials to take strict action on a day-to-day basis. That is possible only when they are legally equipped to handle these cases," said Sadhana Hegde, Founder of Sahavarthin Animal Welfare Trust.

> **"Officials were divided into groups and were given case studies**
> – Suralkar Vikas Kishor, BBMP

BBMP gets animal cruelty inspector

According to Hegde, many times situations arise when the complainant is not willing to file an FIR. In such cases, there is a need for an authority to come forward and file the case and take it for trial or conviction.

"So far, it is the NGOs that have been filing cases on behalf of the complainants. There is a necessity to assist the citizens who raise the alarm over animal cruelty. While NGOs have been assisting, it has not been enough. Thus, the department got an order rolled out from the Chief Commissioner, stating that under the BBMP Act and PCA, it is the responsibility of BBMP to drive anti-cruelty campaigns. Under this, the veterinary inspector of the department will double-hat as an anti-cruelty inspector and take up cruelty cases," added Hegde.

'Devices look fancy, leading people to believe they are safe'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

nicotine content in e-cigarettes, which leads to stronger addiction compared to traditional cigarettes. This increased exposure makes quitting more challenging. Additionally, e-cigarettes contain harmful chemicals like propylene glycol and nitroglycerin, which can cause severe health issues, including lung injuries.

"Currently, we receive very few cases of individuals reporting e-cigarette use, but this wasn't the case earlier when such instances were almost non-existent. Over the past two to three years, however, we've started seeing occasional cases where people mention trying e-cigarettes. Now, it's about once a month that we come across cases where individuals begin with e-cigarettes and eventually progress to other substances," said Dr Narasimha.

He said, these devices look fancy, leading people to believe they are safe, especially as the industry promotes e-cigarettes as safer alternatives. "The World Health Organisation (WHO) has provided guidelines on their consumption and side effects, which should be circulated to raise awareness that e-cigarettes are not safe. There are two aspects to consider: supply reduction and demand reduction. Since PECA Act 2019 is implemented in supply there is not much supply compared to other countries. On the demand side, perceptions need to change, as many people believe e-cigarettes are safe due to their portrayal in movies," Dr Narasimha added.

WHO said it

According to WHO, e-cigarettes are part of the broader category of electronic nicotine and non-nicotine delivery systems (ENDS and ENNDS), heat liquids to create aerosols that users inhale. These e-liquids may contain nicotine, additives, flavours, and chemicals harmful to health. The WHO is concerned about their aggressive marketing to young people. Currently, 88 countries have no minimum age for purchasing e-cigarettes, and 74 countries lack regulations. With over 16,000 attractive flavours and social media influencers, e-cigarettes target children, increasing youth use.

BBMP's three-pronged approach

Dr Kumar, BBMP official (Tobacco Department), told BM that e-cigarettes are banned and a large committee has been formed to address this issue. "Different squads have been set up with the authority to seize e-cigarettes from outlets. According to reports, e-cigarette use is particularly high among youth. However, no one openly admits to using them, and surveys have not yielded promising results. A global adult tobacco survey might provide more accurate data. Most cases are found in the 15-18 age group."

To tackle this, a three-pronged approach has been implemented. First, awareness campaigns are being conducted across 2,760 schools in BBMP limits, with 12 events planned in each ward to educate students about the risks of e-cigarettes. Secondly a special committee has been established, and "nodal teachers" have been assigned the additional responsibility of monitoring and reporting such incidents and third, the 'Be Smart, Don't Start' initiative involves student volunteers observing activity within 100 yards of schools and reporting via QR codes. Reports are investigated promptly to curb the problem, Dr Kumar explains.

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Road unfinished

Shampura

For over a year, the road near 3rd Cross, Aysha Clinic, Shampura, has remained incomplete following sanitary work. Residents are now urging authorities to expedite the road repairs.

Huts restoration

MKK Road

A neglected water hut near GD Park on MKK Road lies unused. With summer nearing, residents urge restoring water huts citywide to help citizens.

Cratered road

Herohalli

The road linking Magadi Road at Herohalli Cross to Tumkur Road (8th Mile) is filled with craters, posing serious risks to vehicles. Citizens are urging authorities to expedite the asphalting work.

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Committees remain silent as forest land issues worsen

Environment Ministry and Karnataka's directives for circle-level committees remain unimplemented, with experts citing escalating forest land encroachment concerns

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A reply from the Karnataka Forest Department (KFD) to a Right to Information (RTI) query has provided answers for a large amount of forest area under encroachment in Karnataka.

The RTI application sought information on meetings held by district-level committees formulated to look into forest encroachment cases at the circle level between April 2020 and September 2024. Details were sought from the Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (APCCF), Land Records for Belagavi, Dharwad, and Canara circles.

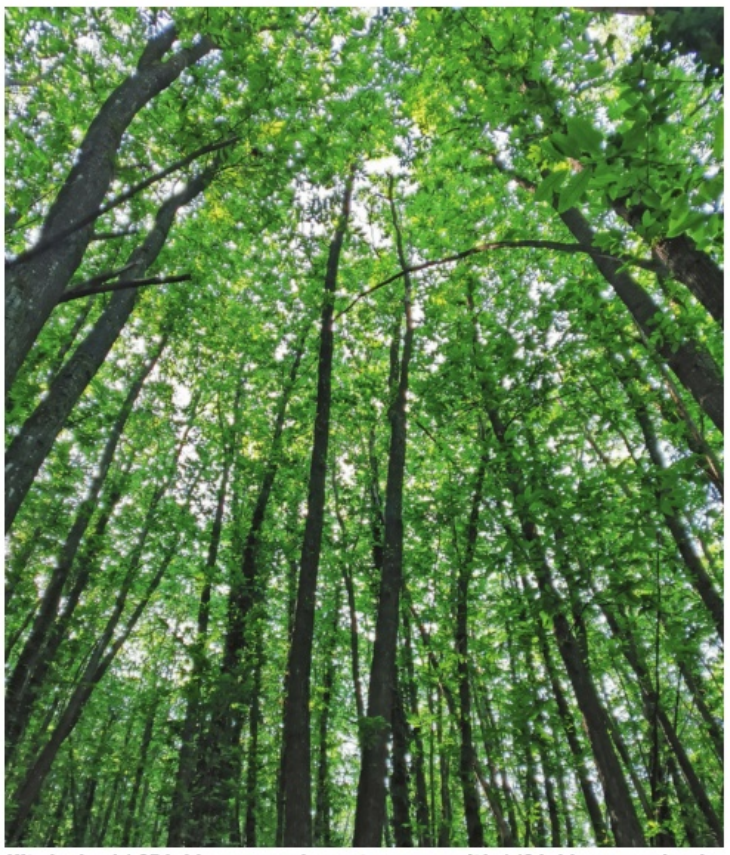
While the Dharwad Circle administration cited a lack of information on the subject, the Canara Circle administration shared two meeting proceedings, held in December 2022 and November 2023. Response from Belagavi Circle is awaited.

When BM approached KFD administration in Belagavi, a senior official said that encroachment cases are being handled by CFs (Conservator of Forests) and ACFs (Assistant Conservator of Forests), suggesting indirectly that no district-level committee is functional in the circle.

"We have officials at the district level who are keeping a close eye on forest encroachment cases. In case of encroachment, 64(A) proceedings are being managed by Assistant Conservators of Forest in their districts," said the official.

Notably, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), in 2002, issued directions for the formulation of committees at Circle levels to look into forest encroachment cases. As per the order, the committee under the chairmanship of the Conservator of the Forest (CF) should meet every quarter to take effective measures for eviction of encroachers from forest land. These committees are also supposed to submit quarterly reports to the government on eviction progress.

Following instructions from the Centre, the Government of Karnataka also issued a circular stressing the need for framing a time-bound program for the eviction of encroachers from forest land. The circular cited a Supreme Court's order of 2001 that suggested the formulation of a committee at the forest Circle level under the chairmanship of CF with the District Collector, Superintendent of Police, and Deputy Conservators of Forest as members. Apart from monitoring encroachments, the committee was also entrusted with the task of assisting concerned forest officers in the eviction process.



K'taka had 1.25 lakh encroachment cases, with 1.18 lakh unresolved

> **The department is in clear violation of these orders. Such lack of action is reason behind increasing forest encroachment cases. Priorities of dept are misplaced** –Activist

Experts say the response to the RTI query shows a violation of directions issued by MoEF&CC and the state government.

"The department is in clear violation of these orders. Such lack of action is the reason behind ever-increasing forest encroachment cases in the state. Priorities of the department are misplaced leading to a shift in focus away from encroachment cases. Belagavi, Dharwad, and Canara are the regions with the highest forest area under encroachment. If the committees in these circles are not performing their duties, one can imagine the state of affairs in other circles," said a city-based wildlife activist.

In the last five years, evictions have happened on only 5,719 acres of forest area.

Up until March 2024, Karnataka recorded encroachment of 2.4 lakh acres of forest land, but eviction happened on just over 3K acres.

Encroachment data also shows that over 1.25 lakh encroachment cases have been registered in the state till March 2024. Out of these cases, Karnataka Forest Department has been able to handle a little over 7,000 cases so far. Still, more than 1.18 lakh cases are currently pending.

Citizens worry about impact of felling 2,000 trees

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

criticality of the project and the number of trees proposed to be felled, the timeline to file objections in response to the notice should be increased from the current 10-day period.

Citizens have also raised concerns about the impact of felling 2,000 trees on the city's biodiversity and ecosystem. They also underlined health concerns such as respiratory disorders.

However, permission has been granted to cut 1,988 trees, translocate 161 trees from the stretch, and execute the project.

City-based tree activists and environmentalists say the process of inviting objection has become a mere formality.

Mere formality

"BBMP Forest Department must establish a robust feedback mechanism for their public notices and citizen inputs. Currently, there is a glaring lack of communication or response to public notices, making it a mere formality. The Climate Action Cell of BBMP should also actively engage with citizen feedback to address concerns about tree felling and environmental issues. Without transparency and action on objections raised by citizens, this process risks losing its purpose," said Vinod Jacob, Namma Bengaluru Foundation.

In response to the objections, K-RIDE has clarified that an environmental impact assessment (EIA) to understand the fallout of the project is being conducted. However, railway projects are exempted from prior environmental clearance under the Railway Act, 1989; apart from a notification issued by MoEF&CC also exempts suburban rail project from prior environmental clearance.

The agency also said that alternative possibilities have been examined and it has been found that except for the present proposal, there is no feasible alternative since land is a precious commodity in and around Bengaluru and the proposal has been formulated with 90% government land utilisation.

"Thus, removal of trees is inevitable," K-RIDE has responded.

As per the TEC order, while 289 trees will be translocated, 161 will be retained on site and 1988 will be felled.

The OM by BBMP, announcing TEC's order, points to many shortcomings, say environmentalists.

An inspection of the project area by the range forest officer concerned shows that 226 trees between Channasandra Railway Station and Muddenahalli Line Cross were already felled by the South West Railway (SWR) authorities.

"BBMP DCF should specify actions taken against SWR when they discovered that 226 trees were felled by them without permission. The OM also states that a detailed field inspection by forest officers revealed that an additional 265 trees are standing in the project area. Why were these trees not enumerated in the original application? This shows the lackadaisical approach of authorities in making applications," noted Dattatreya Devare, trustee of Bangalore Environment Trust.

Redefined poised for Derby win

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The hot tip from the cool tipster is Redefined, winner of the Pune Derby, fit to claim another Derby sash on Republic Day. The HPSL Bangalore Derby, offering a rich purse of Rs. 74.8 lakh, has attracted nine-star performers, including three fillies claiming a 1.5 kg gender allowance.

After his Pune Derby victory, Redefined faced a training setback but recovered just in time for the big event. Trainer Prasanna Kumar and his six owners are confident the colt will perform at his best and claim the Derby riches.

"He impressed me in a mock race and he has consistently produced good performances in his preparation for the big event," said top gun Akshay Kumar, who will guide the fortunes of Redefined in the classic mile-and-half Derby journey.

The Derby has created a buzz in racing and social circles. BTC (Bangalore Turf Club) Chairman, Manjunath Ramesh confirmed the track is in top condition for the event, with a full house of spectators, including fashionistas and railbirds. The women's cheer brigade is backing Magnetic to challenge the favourite. "It will prove to be Lady's Day Out at the BTC on Republic and the top filly Magnetic and Parvati will stand tall at the victory podium," said Simra Fathima Sheriff, a student, excited to watch the action for the first time.

Trainer Prasanna Kumar with star performer Redefined

Despite Redefined's season debut after a setback, bookmakers are strongly backing him, offering even money. The second favourite, Ranquelino from trainer Darius Byramji's yard, is quoted at 5/1. "His brilliant mock race and his suggestive final preparatory gallop indicate that all is well with the favourite and he should win," said young bookie Naren Prasanna.

Derby apart, the Stewards Gold Cup and the C Narayana Reddy Memorial Million are the two principal added attractions which have attracted creditable fields on D-day. The `Million' sponsored by sports promoter Swaroop Kumar is an open affair, 10 juveniles looking forward to chalking out their first career success and in the Stewards Gold Cup, the racing pundits are nominating Lone Ranger to corner glory.

"It's a competitive card, and picking winners will be tricky," said a racing pundit.

PAGE 12 ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE Chasing AI goals

State seeks financial support for city infra ahead of Union Budget '25

With many big-ticket projects being non-starters due to lack of funds, State government is now banking on Centre for funds. In this regard, with the Union Budget set to be presented on February 1, Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar has written to Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday urging the inclusion of funds for Bengaluru's critical infrastructure projects in the 2025-26 Union Budget.

"Bengaluru has emerged as a global hub for technological advancements and investment, driving economic growth and creating jobs for the country's youth. However, with the city's population nearing 1.5 crore, the pressure on infrastructure has significantly increased. To maintain Bengaluru's reputation as the Silicon Valley of India, it is imperative to address its infrastructure challenges. The state government has initiated several key projects, and we seek support from the Union Budget to ensure their implementation," the letter read.

Motorists stranded at Hebbal Junction on Saturday

Key projects planned

He said that with limited space for road expansion, the state government is planning two tunnel roads to reduce traffic congestion, with proposed costs of ₹15,000 crore and ₹25,000 crore. The state government has prepared a ₹19,000 crore Detailed Project Report (DPR) for the project and opened it for public consultation. Following the success of the double-decker flyover on the Yellow Line Phase 3, the government plans to extend the concept to Phase 4 of the Metro, requiring ₹8,916 crore. "To address traffic at 11 congested junctions, the construction of 17 flyovers covering 99.5 km is essential, requiring ₹12,000 crore," he mentioned.

The Bengaluru Development Authority (BDA) has proposed an eight-lane, 73.04 km PRR business corridor under a public-private partnership model, totalling ₹27,000 crore." Additionally, to prevent encroachment near lakes, rivers, and stormwater drains, a 300-km buffer zone road is planned, requiring ₹3,000 crore. Further, the city's additional water demand will be met through the Cauvery Stage VI project, which aims to supply 500 MLD of water by 2028. "…Hence, we urge the FM and state's parliamentary representatives to ensure that these critical projects receive adequate funding in the Union Budget."

Microbes found in veggie samples from city markets

FSSAI finds microbial contamination in 10 of 190 analysed samples, from onions, cucumbers, green chillies, & brinjals

Sridhar.Vivan
@timesofindia.com
TWEETS @sridharvMIRROR

Microbial contamination was found in some veggie samples collected from Bengaluru and nearby districts. The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) recently collected and analysed 190 samples of vegetables and fruits from various markets in Bengaluru Urban and Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) zones. Among these, it was reported that microbial contamination was detected in 10 samples from four different types of vegetables.

Samples were also collected from districts like Bengaluru Rural (30), Ramanagara (4), Davanagere (33), Kolar (6), Chitradurga (33), Tumakuru (25), Chikkaballapur (5) and Mandya (2). An official said, "The samples were tested at the Food Safety and Standards Laboratory in Bengaluru, where microbial contamination was found in onions, cucumbers, green chillies, and brinjals."

A senior official from FSSAI stated, "Of the samples collected from BBMP's four zones, microbial contamination was found in eight samples. Similarly, one sample each from Bengaluru Urban and Chikkaballapur showed contamination. Notices have been issued to the retail outlets involved."

People buy leafy vegetables at a market in Bengaluru Friday

To assess the safety and quality of vegetables and fruits consumed daily, a survey was conducted by the state unit of FSSAI in August 2024. A total of 328 samples of 137 different varieties of vegetables and fruits were collected from 10 districts, including Bengaluru Urban, BBMP limits, and nearby areas. "Out of 137 varieties of vegetables and fruits tested, microbial growth was detected in four samples of onions and two samples each of cucumbers, green chillies, and brinjals," another official added.

The survey covered major markets in the city, including KR Market, Kalasipalya Wholesale Market, Jayanagar Block II and IV markets, Malleswaram Sampige Road Market, Shivajinagar Russell Market, Yeshwanthpur Commercial Complex, and Rajajinagar Block IV. In total, 162 samples were collected from BBMP zones and 28 from other parts of Bengaluru Urban.

Need for better management

Microbial contamination can occur at various stages. "There is a need for scientific handling, transportation, and storage of fruits and vegetables. Cold storage facilities and proper maintenance in supermarkets and Hopcoms are prioritised, but street vendors often neglect these measures," a senior FSSAI official said. Officials said that when microbial contamination is detected, farmers cannot be held directly accountable. Instead, vendors and retailers who fail to follow proper packaging and storage protocols are penalised. First-time offenders are fined and warned, while repeat offences may lead to legal action.

Advertorial

AASSC Signs Landmark MoU with Ambara Institute of Aviation

In a significant development for India's aviation training sector, the Aerospace and Aviation Sector Skill Council (AASSC) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Ambara Institute of Aviation.

The agreement, signed by Mr. Debashish Mishra, Officiating CEO of AASSC, and Mrs. Rohini Rao, Founder and CEO of Ambara Institute of Aviation, marks a strategic collaboration to enhance aviation training standards in the country.

AASSC the apex body for skill development in the aerospace and aviation sector, is promoted by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) and the Society of Indian Aerospace Technologies & Industries (SIATI). It is governed by representatives from leading airline companies and government agencies like the Airports Authority of India and the Ministry of Civil Aviation.

Ambara Institute of Aviation is a renowned name in aviation training, known for its Diploma programs in Airline cabin crew and customer service roles. It has successfully trained and placed hundreds of students, many of whom now work with top airlines like Air India, Indigo, Kuwait Airways and Qatar Airways.

This MoU makes Ambara the first private aviation academy to receive approval for the prestigious Training of Trainers (ToT) program. This recognition highlights Mrs. Rao's extensive international experience as an ex-cabin crew member with Etihad Airways and a master trainer, coupled with her 100% success rate in student placements.

Ambara is also celebrated for its career awareness initiatives, conducting seminars and workshops to guide aspiring youth toward aviation careers. As part of this partnership, AASSC and Ambara will host free workshops across India, offering insights into building successful aviation careers.

Scan the QR and Register now to join these free workshops and take your first step toward a rewarding career in the skies.

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BENGALURU SPEAKS

and gets heard on this page

STORYBEHINDTHEPHOTO

RARE SIGHTING

Our reader spotted this albino yellow-billed babbler (on the right) in Gopinatham during a jungle safari. It is exceedingly rare to see birds with such genetic defects

The picture was clicked by reader **Shiva D**

If you have a picture and a story to share, send us the picture with your name and number at **mybangaloremirror@timesofindia.com**

Bengaluru-Mysuru Highway requires a safety overhaul

Top cop points out structural inadequacies, other pressing problems, urges officials concerned to focus on accident prevention measures

| Bangalore Mirror Bureau
mybangaloremirror@timesofindia.com

TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

With an increasing number of accidents occurring on Bengaluru-Mysuru Highway, Superintendent of Police (SP) Srinivas Gowda has urged concerned department officials to take proactive measures to address the issue. During the meeting, the SP asked the officials to focus on addressing flaws on the newly constructed Bengaluru-Mysuru Highway. "The collection of tolls should align with the proper usage of roads by the public. However, the highway is riddled with issues that need to be rectified," he stated.

What are the major concerns?

Unauthorised entry and exit points along highways emerged as a significant concern, with SP Srinivas Gowda calling for immediate regulation to address the issue. He further highlighted the pressing problems plaguing service roads, stressing the need for prompt resolution.

The SP also pointed out structural inadequacies, such as the absence of underpasses at Bidadi and Channapatna railway crossings, which create substantial inconvenience for travellers. Additionally, he drew attention to the challenges on the Bengaluru-Harohalli bypass and stressed the need for high-mast lights on highways to ensure smooth and safe night travel.

`Reckless driving, including erratic lane changes and drunk driving, was identified as a major contributor to accidents. Gowda affirmed that strict action would be taken against public negligence contributing to accidents while also addressing departmental lapses. He reiterated the commitment to implementing measures that make roads safer and more user-friendly.

Precautions and advice

To enhance road safety, he recommended the installation of speed bumps only in areas where they are absolutely necessary, cautioning against unscientifically designed infrastructure that could pose risks to motorists.

The SP also advised motorcyclists to wear helmets at all times and reminded car passengers to use seat belts. Parents are urged not to permit underage kids to drive/ride vehicles.

A person was carrying a wooden log across Bengaluru-Mysuru Highway on Wednesday, alarming several motorists

DID YOU KNOW?

A rare plant known as the 'corpse flower' bloomed in Sydney on Friday for the first time in more than a decade, emitting an odour likened to rotting flesh and delighting thousands of visitores who queued for a whiff. The plant typically does not bloom more than once every few years and it lasts only about a day. The oversize corpse flower features fluted crimson petals and can measure more than a metre (3 feet) across with a pointed centre stalk that can top 3 metres (10 feet). A specimen has not bloomed in Sydney since 2010. — Reuters

GET HEARD WITH MIRROR

9591233247

Let's see how much you know about Namma Bengaluru, folks. Tell us something incredible and mind-boggling about this beautiful city and our editors and researchers will check it out. If it's credible, we'll give it a shout-out, with your name and picture.

BUST FAKE NEWS WITH BANGALORE MIRROR

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Can you burn body fat by having garlic, cumin seeds concoction?

| Newsmeter.in

Claim: An Instagram video suggests drinking a concoction prepared by boiling garlic and cumin seeds with lemon extract to burn fat.

Fact: The claim is misleading. The recipe alone cannot burn fat. A balanced diet and good exercise are essential.

An Instagram video about an 'ancient method' to burn body fat has gone viral. The video advises boiling two cloves of garlic and a teaspoon of cumin seeds mixed with lemon juice in two cups of water and drinking it on an empty stomach to burn fat.

NewsMeter found that the claim is misleading.

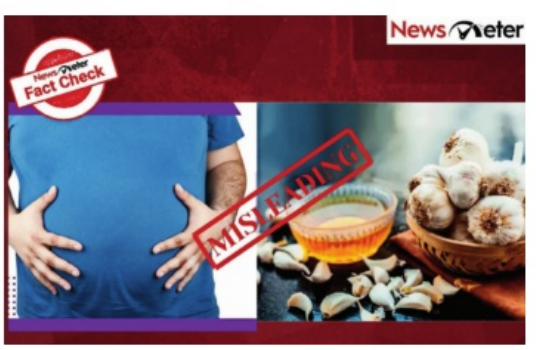
Dr Raghavendra Cherukku, an interventional cardiologist, explained if the method is useful for burning fat: "There is no single strategy to reduce fat. This strategy has to be supplemented with an intake of healthy food and regular exercise. The antilipidemic property of garlic can help reduce LDL and increase HDL but has no impact on triglycerides."

Garlic has antioxidant and antibiotic properties, which can aid in other health benefits. "Some studies done on rats and humans have proved the antilipidemic properties of garlic can help burn fat. However, taking the concoction on an empty stomach can be detrimental for those with gastric issues. Hence it can be taken after eating food," Dr Raghavendra said.

A balanced diet with high protein and fibre, and low oil and low carbohydrates is essential to reduce triglycerides. Food containing carbohydrates, like maida, gets converted into triglycerides, which cannot be reduced by taking the concoction. "Most South Indian diets use a lot of oil, around 10-15 tablespoons per day,

against the maximum requirement of 2-3 tablespoons per day. Physical exercise for 150 minutes per week and a balanced diet are essential to reduce triglycerides and bad cholesterol," Dr Raghavendra added.

The story was originally published by Newsmeter.in (https://newsmeter.in/fact-check/fact-check-burn-body-fat-by-drinking-water-made-from-boiling-garlic-cumin-seeds-lets-find-out-742528) and republished by Bangalore Mirror as part of the Shakti Collective.



HEALTH TIP: By enhancing muscle strength, side planks can aid in reducing waistline fat

Always cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your elbow when coughing or sneezing

BangaloreMirror 9
Sunday, January 26, 2025
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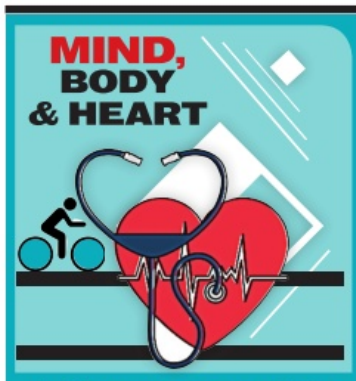

All you need to know about...

Bulletproof coffee

What is it?
Bulletproof coffee is a unique beverage that does not simply fall under the standard definition of coffee. This drink has a very high fat and a very low carbohydrate percentage and is quite heavy in nature; it not only satiates the body but nourishes the brain. Instead of making use of an electric whisk, this coffee uses computer-coke coffee, heavy cream, and grass-fed butter resulting in a powerhouse of a beverage. The final product resembles a latte but is thicker and more energy-packed as it is bursting with healthy fats.

Benefits: Boosts energy
Bulletproof coffee combines caffeine with fats that are good for you to give energy that lasts. Normal coffee can boost energy quickly but can make you crash afterwards. The fats in bulletproof coffee help absorb caffeine slowly, which supports even energy levels throughout the day.

Weight loss
Bulletproof coffee has been shown to contribute to weight loss in a number of ways. To begin with, it is high in fat, which gives you a feeling of fullness after a relatively long time and thus the risk of overeating or snacking, between meals, is minimized.
Second, MCT oil has been reported to cause an enhancement of fat oxidation, allowing the body to burn fat more effectively. The energy of the relationship between caffeine and healthy fats may boost exercise performance.

Regulates sugar
Bulletproof coffee, in contrast to sugary coffees or breakfast snacks, does not affect the blood sugar level in any way. The beneficial fats produced from butter and MCT oil help to keep the blood sugar level steady, thus no scary ups and downs are experienced thereby providing a healthier alternative to such beverages. —Femina

Yet to get over your craving for cake? Try these recipes

BAKED TO PERFECTION

FLAVOURED POUND CAKE

INGREDIENTS
- Butter (soft): 4 sticks
- Sugar: 3 cups
- Sifted cake flour: 3 ½ cups
- Extra large eggs (beaten): 6
- Baking powder: ¼ teaspoon
- Milk: 1 cup
- Lemon extract: 1 teaspoon
- Vanilla extract: 1 teaspoon
- Rum: 1 teaspoon
- Coconut oil: 1 teaspoon
- Imitation butter: 1 teaspoon

METHOD
- Beat cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy.
- Add eggs and beat well.
- Add flour and milk interchangeably.
- Add the lemon extract, vanilla extract, rum, coconut oil, and imitation butter.
- Grease and flour a large Angel food tube bake pan and add the cake mixture.
- Preheat oven to 325 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Bake for 75-85 minutes or until the cake is clean from inserting a toothpick.
- Let the cake cool for at least 2-3 hours before removing it from the pan.

—Dr. Sharon Malone

JAMAICAN FRUIT CAKE

INGREDIENTS
- Chopped fruits including dark and light raisins, dried fruit mixture (citron, cherries lemon and orange peel, pineapple, etc.), prunes, and currents: 8 LBS (16 cups or 4 quarts)
- Chop fruit in a processor or blender with sherry and rum as the liquid about a month before you plan to bake the cake. Drain any excess liquid.
- Baking soda: 1 teaspoon
- Baking powder: 1 teaspoon
- Butter: 1-pound (roughly 450gm)
- Eggs: 1 dozen
- Dark brown sugar: 1-pound (roughly 450gm)
- All-purpose flour: 4 cups
- Cinnamon: 2 teaspoons
- Nutmeg: ½ teaspoon
- Allspice: 1/8 teaspoon
- Cloves (ground): 1/8 teaspoon

METHOD
- Preheat oven to 250 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Grease pans and flour. Use baker's spray which is oil with flour for the pans. Cut parchment or brown paper to fit the top of the pan. Spray each piece to cover the pan.
- Beat eggs, cream butter and sugar, add eggs and mix.
- Combine dry ingredients: cinnamon, nutmeg, allspice, baking powder, baking soda, and flour. Add to mixture then add fruits
- The mixture will be very thick and needs to be mixed by hand. Pour the mixture into pans and cover with a piece of greased and floured paper.
- Bake at 250 degrees for two hours (time may vary depending on the size and weight of the pan). A pan of water should be placed at the bottom of the oven throughout the cooking time to provide steam. Check after 1 hour and periodically to test doneness by inserting a toothpick If it comes out clean, the cake is done Cool on rack. Drizzle with rum
- Wrap in wax paper (or plastic wrap) and follow with aluminium foil
- This mixture will make about 5 cakes depending on how large and full the pans are. The new nonstick pans work well instead of greased and floured paper.

—Kerry Washington

SNOW SUGAR COOKIES

INGREDIENTS
- All Purpose Flour: 3 Cups
- Baking Powder: 1 ½ teaspoon
- Salt: ½ teaspoon
- Unsalted Butter: 1 Cup
- Room Temp Brick Cream Cheese: 2 Oz
- Granulated Sugar: 1 Cup
- Granulated Sugar (On The Side For Rolling The Cookies In): ½ Cup
- Room Temp Large Egg: 1
- Almond Extract: ½ Tsp
- Vanilla Extract: 1 ½ teaspoon

METHOD
- Whisk flour, baking powder and salt until combined and set aside
- In a large bowl, mix butter and cream cheese for about 2 minutes until smooth and creamy
- Add granulated sugar and mix until fluffy and light in colour
- Mix in eggs, vanilla extract and almond extract. You may need to scrape down the sides of the bowl to fully mix.
- Slowly mix in flour, salt and baking powder combination on low speed
- Remove the dough from the bowl, wrap it in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for a minimum of 2 hours minimum to a maximum of 2 days.
- When ready to bake, remove the dough from the refrigerator – if it was refrigerated for more than 4 hours, let it rest on the counter for 20 minutes so that it is easier to work with
- Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit and line baking sheets with parchment paper
- Scoop and roll spoonfuls of dough into balls and roll in granulated sugar until coated, place on baking sheet 3 inches apart
- Gently press the cookie balls down to semi-flatten and bake for 13-15 minutes – rotate the pan midway through to ensure even baking
- Allow cookies to rest for 5 minutes on the baking sheet before moving them to a cooling rack or serving plate.

—Nicole Avant

Recipes for Your Mama's Kitchen podcast on Audible

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I, NIKITA KULKARNI, R/o Flat #201,1270, Poornapragna Resd, 48th Crs Rd, Poornapragna Layout, Uttarahalli, Bangalore - 560061, have changed my name to NIKEETA UMESH KULKARNI, vide affidavit dated 24/01/2025, sworn before notary Venkataraju H G, Bangalore.

I, Abbavaram Pravalika D/o Abbavaram Ramanajul Reddy (W/o Polimera Sudharshan Reddy) R/o At 1757, Flat No 102, Block C, Sahakara Nagar, Cqal Layout, Hebbal, Bangalore - 560092 have changed my name to Abbavaram Pravallika for all future purposes.

I, Dikshita Ajay S/o Ajay Kumar Galada R/o #101 Floor No 51 Prosper Park Apartment, South End Basavanagudi, Bengaluru 560004 have changed my name to Dikshita Galada.

I Shaikh Noorpasha Peer Mohamed R/o at 14/1a, 3rd cross Rahmathnagar, R.T. Nagar post Bengaluru- 560032 have changed my name to Shaikh Noor Pasha

I, Raghupatruni Anuradha W/o Shivakumar Patnaik R/o B-105 Pride Apartment, Bilekahalli b'lore-560076 have changed my name to Anuradha S Patnaik

I, Farheen Taj M W/o Dastagir Shariff R/o U-78 5th Cross Maruthi Extn Malleswaram B'lore-560003 have changed my name to Farheen Taj

Chasing AI goals

Meta to spend up to $65 bn this year, Zuckerberg says

Meta Platforms plans to spend $65 billion this year to expand its AI infrastructure, CEO Mark Zuckerberg said on Friday, aiming to bolster the company's position against rivals OpenAI and Google in the race to dominate the technology.

As part of the investment, Meta will ramp up hiring for artificial intelligence roles and build a more than 2-gigawatt data center that would be large enough to cover a big part of Manhattan.

The company — among the top buyers of Nvidia's sought-after AI chips — aims to end the year with over 1.3 million graphics processors and plans to bring about 1 GW of computing power online in 2025. "This will be a defining year for AI," Zuckerberg said in a Facebook post.

"This is a massive effort, and over the coming years it will drive our core products and business."

Big tech firms have been investing tens of billions of dollars to develop AI infrastructure after the success of OpenAI's ChatGPT.

Meta's announcement comes just days after U.S. President Donald Trump announced that OpenAI, SoftBank and Oracle will form a venture called Stargate and invest $500 billion in AI infrastructure across the U.S.

Earlier this month, Microsoft said it was planning to invest about $80 billion in fiscal 2025 to develop data centers, while Amazon.com has said its 2025 spending would be higher than an estimated $75 billion in 2024.

"Zuckerberg is signaling to the market he does not want to be second in the AI race. The timing of the announcement was likely impacted by Stargate, which created urgency around sending a message," D.A. Davidson analyst Gil Luria said.

Shares of Meta were trading 1% higher

The company has emerged as a big player in the AI race with its AI chatbot, Ray-Ban smart glasses and open-source approach, which sets it apart from rivals by allowing consumers and most businesses to use its Llama AI models for free. Zuckerberg expects Meta's AI assistant — available across its services — to serve more than 1 billion people in 2025, up from around 600 million monthly active users it had last year.

The $60 billion to $65 billion capital spending outlined for 2025 would mark a big jump from the company's estimated expenditure of $38 billion to $40 billion for last year. **-Reuters**

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Xpoz India

Paul McCartney says he fears AI will rip off artists

Paul McCartney urged the British government not to make a change to copyright laws that he says could let artificial intelligence companies rip off artists.

The government is consulting on whether to let tech firms use copyrighted material to help train artificial intelligence models unless the creators explicitly opt out.

McCartney told the BBC that would make it harder for artists to retain control of their work and undermine Britain's creative industries.

"You get young guys, girls, coming up, and they write a beautiful song, and they don't own it, and they don't have anything to do with it. And anyone who wants can just rip it off," the 82-year-old former Beatle said in an interview to be broadcast Sunday. An extract was released Saturday by the BBC.

"The truth is, the money's going somewhere. When it gets on the streaming platforms, somebody is getting it, and it should be the person who created it. It shouldn't be some tech giant somewhere."

Britain's center-left Labour Party government says it wants to make the U.K. a world leader in AI. In December, it announced a consultation into how copyright law can "enable creators and right holders to exercise control over, and seek remuneration for, the use of their works for AI training" while also ensuring "AI developers have easy access to a broad range of high-quality creative content."

Publishers, artists' organizations and media companies, including The Associated Press, have banded together as the Creative Rights in AI Coalition to oppose weakening copyright protections. We're the people, you're the government. You're supposed to protect us. That's your job," McCartney said. **-AP**

BITS & BYTES

Ads on Threads

Meta Platforms will begin test launching ads on its social media platform Threads with a few brands in the US and Japan, it said on Friday, as the app hits over 300 million monthly active users.

During early testing starting Friday, image ads will appear in the Threads home feed, placed between content posts for a small percentage of users, Meta said in a blog.

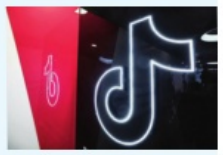
The social media giant said it will monitor the test closely before scaling it broadly, adding that businesses will be able to extend their existing Meta ad campaigns to Threads.

Meta will also begin testing an inventory filter for ads in Threads, which enabled through AI, allows advertisers to control the sensitivity level of the organic content their ads appear next to. **-Reuters**

TikTok trade

People are listing phones preloaded with TikTok for tens of thousands of dollars on eBay, Facebook marketplace and other online storefronts — though it is not clear if there are many buyers at those prices.

TikTok was briefly unavailable to U.S. users over the weekend, but as of Sunday anyone who had previously downloaded it has been able to use it. The app is still not available for download on Apple and Google's app stores, so anyone who didn't think to get TikTok before Sunday is out of luck.



As a result, some entrepreneurial spirits are selling phones and tablets that have TikTok — and other apps from its parent company ByteDance, such as Lemon8 and video editor CapCut. On eBay, listings could be found for as much as $50,000 (or as little as $340) on Friday. While it's not clear how many such phones have sold, the ones selling for hundreds have received the most bids. **-AP**

Iris scan pay ban

Brazil's data protection authority ruled that tech firm Tools for Humanity, co-founded by OpenAI CEO Sam Altman, must stop offering compensation for iris scans in the country, it said in a statement on Friday.

The ban is a preventive measure, data protection authority ANPD said, adding that it starts from Saturday and includes compensation through cryptocurrencies.

Tools for Humanity leads the World project, which aims to create a global identity system through scanning people's irises in exchange for cryptocurrency and a digital ID.

World's press office in Brazil said in a statement its service complies with all Brazilian laws and regulations. **-Reuters**

Life-changing events
Sonam Kapoor recently opened up about the significant changes in her life, revealing how her personal journey has been completely transformed, especially after embracing motherhood and marriage

True vision

Yami shares how film showed her more than what eyes can see

Actress Yami Gautam Dhar is celebrating eight years of "Kaabil" and she shared that the film will stay as an experience that showed her more than there is to see with her eyes.

Yami took to her Instagram stories, where she posted a still from the film, which also stars Hrithik Roshan.

She wrote as the caption: "Kaabil will stay as an experience that showed me more than there is to see with my eyes. Supriya-An unforgettable experience and most cherished one. Thank you for showing love to a story that lives on..."

Directed by Sanjay Gupta, "Kaabil", is an action thriller. The film also stars Ronit Roy and Rohit Roy.

It follows a blind dubbing artist who becomes disillusioned when his wife faces injustice and dies. He becomes a vigilante and decides to seek revenge against those responsible for his wife's death, while also dodging police with a cover that no one would believe a blind man can kill someone.

The actress, who married filmmaker Aditya Dhar in 2021, welcomed her first born in 2024. She revealed her first child, a boy named Vedavid.

On the acting front, Yami will next be seen in "Dhoom Dhaam", which follows the story of a newly-wed couple, and they face the odds on their wedding night itself. The film also stars Pratik Gandhi.

The film is directed by Rishab Seth and is set to release on February 14 on the streaming giant Netflix.

She was last seen on screen in "Article 370", a political action thriller film directed by Aditya Suhas Jambhale. —**IANS**

Red carpet special

Shanaya Kapoor recently attended the AMIRI Autumn-Winter 2025-2026 Fashion Week Show in Paris. The diva made quite a wave as the only Indian representative at this prestigious event.

Shanaya Kapoor opted for a stunning burgundy blazer, along with matching trousers for the event. She tied up the sleek look with black boots. Shanaya Kapoor's makeup was flawless, with a clean, glowing finish, enhancing the entire look. As for hair, the stunner decided to tie them in a neat bun. Adding a hint of glamour, she also wore silver studs in her ears.

Making the evening even more special, Shanaya Kapoor also met Mike Amiri, the creative director and founder of the eponymous label. These two were seen indulging in a lively conversation during the event. She even expressed her admiration for AMIRI's innovative designs.

Speaking about her experience at the AMIRI Autumn-Winter 2025-2026 Fashion Week Show in Paris, Shanaya Kapoor was quoted saying, "Attending the AMIRI show in Paris was a memorable experience. Meeting Mike Amiri felt so special - his vision and creativity are truly inspiring, and it was amazing to see his work come to life on the runway."

For the unversed, the event took place at Pl. de la Porte de Versailles, Paris, on 23rd January 2025.

In the meantime, Shanaya Kapoor will soon be making her highly anticipated Bollywood debut with the upcoming drama, "Aankhon Ki Gustaakhiyan". She will be seen romancing Vikrant Massey in her debut drama. The film is based on a short story by Ruskin Bond. "Aankhon Ki Gustaakhiyan" has been shot in multiple locations including Mumbai, Mussoorie, and Europe. Bankrolled by Mini Films, the movie is slated to reach the cinema halls in 2025.

In addition to this, Shanaya is also reported to have other projects in her kitty. — **IANS**

Thrilling bite of karma

Director KS Nandeesh, known for his film Dear Vikram that was released in 2022, has come out with a different story blended with mythological elements with current politics and crime. He has done a fine job with the direction and also used Rishi's acting skills superbly, managing to keep audiences engaged throughout this movie.

The movie begins with Rudra (Rishi), a police officer, taking Gutka Ramesh, a drug peddler responsible for rape and murder of a minor girl, to an unknown destination with an intention to eliminate the criminal in a fake encounter. His higher officer demotes him and transfers him to Karnataka Armed Reserve Police mounted company unit where he has to be in-charge for mounted coy stables and a police band. Rudra happens to meet Divya (Priyanka Kumar) and falls in love with her.

Meanwhile, Devi Shetty's (Vinod Alva) son Manu goes missing and Rudra is assigned to investigate the case. Rudra, while interrogating Manu's friends, comes to know that Manu was in love with a girl and they used to travel by 17A Cauvery Express. Rudra also comes to know that 17A Cauvery Express in which school children who were on excursion 25 years ago had met with an accident. You have to watch Rudra Garuda Purana to know whether or not Rudra succeeds in rescuing Manu.

RUDRA GARUDA PURANA
3.0 RATING ★★★☆☆
- **DIRECTOR** KS Nandeesh
- **ACTORS** Rishi, Priyanka Kumar, Vinod Alva, Avinash, KS Sridhar, Ashwini Gowda, Shivaraj KR Pete
- **CERTIFICATION** U/A
- **Duration** 142 minutes

Rishi, as a police officer, is convincing. His dancing skills and dialogue delivery are good. Priyanka Kumar looks beautiful. Avinash and KS Sridhar, as police officers with a vested interest, provide good support. Giri Shivanna provides comic relief. However, veteran actor Vinod Alva, known for acting in Kannada and Telugu movies, disappoints audiences with his mediocre performance.

It is worth a watch for all, and especially for Rishi's fans.

—**Y Maheswara Reddy**

SRK may get refund on 'Mannat'

Bollywood megastar Shah Rukh Khan, who was last seen in 'Jawan', may get a hefty return from the government on his iconic bungalow Mannat in the Bandra area of Mumbai.

The actor is set to get a refund of Rs 9 crore from the government after a calculation error. The Maharashtra government may approve the actor's petition for the refund for excess payment to the collector Mumbai Suburban District with regards to the land where his home is located.

The property, spread over 2,446 square metres, was leased by SRK and his wife, Gauri Khan through a registered agreement in 2001. The couple paid 25 per cent of the ready reckoner price in March 2019 as per the state policy, which was calculated at approximately Rs 27.50 crore.

Later, as per the sources, the actor found out about an 'unintentional error' on the part of the state government while calculating the conversion fee. It is said the value of the bungalow was taken into account by the government instead of the piece of land. Earlier, an old video of SRK had surfaced on social media in which he was seen speaking about his brush with the dark side of the underworld.

He said in the video, "Hindi film industry is the easiest industry to take on right now. We are the largest producers of films in the world. So they (the mafia) would back a film, and say 'I want you in my film'..." — **IANS**

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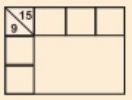
Kakuro

The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas



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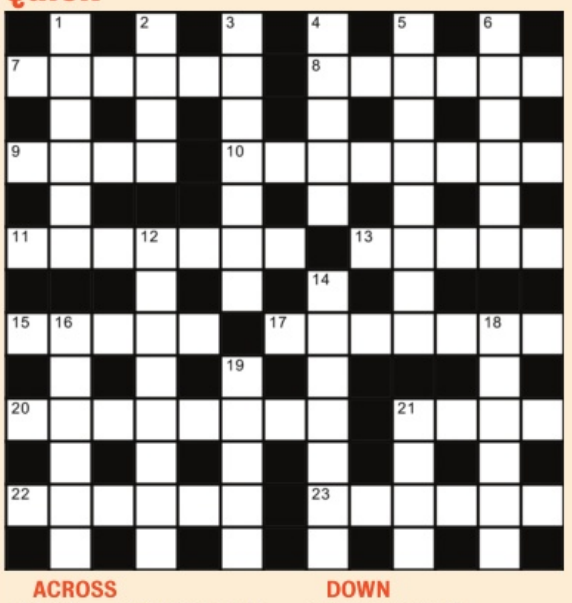
Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.

Quick



ACROSS

7 Zend ___ : Zoroastrian holy book (6)
8 Dwarfed tree (6)
9 Growl (4)
10 Second-rate (8)
11 Stealing from (7)
13 ___ Hills: Bangalore's highest point (5)
15 Droop, hunch or slouch (5)
17 One's brother or sister (7)
20 String of beads (8)
21 London gallery (4)
22 Bravely (6)
23 Apparel (6)

DOWN

1 Nonetheless (6)
2 Russian ruler (4)
3 Popular sitcom Everybody Loves _____ (7)
4 Home (5)
5 Casual (8)
6 Ancient Indian dynasty (6)
12 Obstruction of passage (8)
14 A condiment and pickling medium (7)
16 Slight quake (6)
18 Public officer (6)
19 Woodland deity (5)
21 Canine in Oz (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: K EQUALS G

PIYYWUQOO WO PNMJWUK ONZQNUQ WU ENAL ILZO IUJ HUNRWUK ENA PNMJ VPQ RPNMQ RNLMJ.

Linemaro

Are you a vampire? You looked a little thirsty when you looked at me

Mindchow

With an eye made quiet by the power of harmony, and the deep power of joy, we see into the life of things

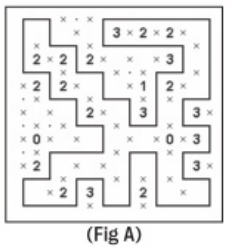
Joke of the day

A good way to get to know your date is to ask about their first pet, favourite movie and mom's maiden name. Then login and read all their emails

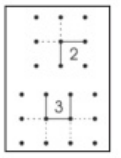
Loop

Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.



(Fig A)

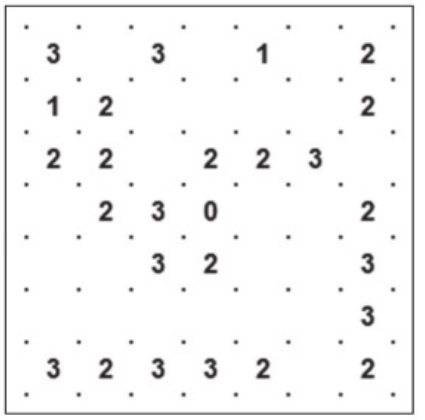


(Fig B) Not Allowed

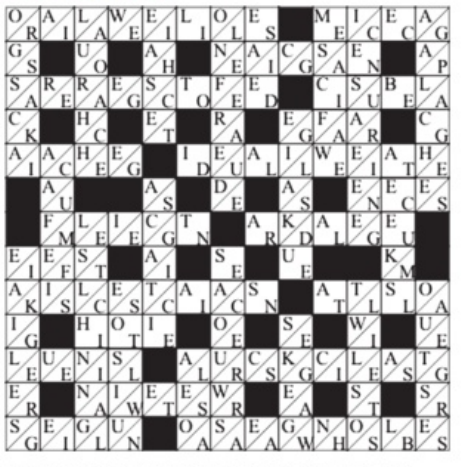
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...

1	2	3	4	5
6		M		
7				
8				
9				

ACROSS

1 Socle; 6 Prams; 7 UK Aim; 8 Miter; 9 Bears

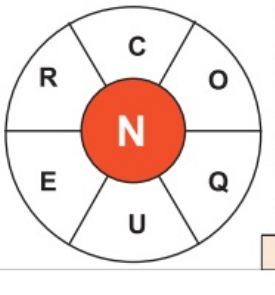
DOWN

1 Mr Cub; 2 A mail; 3 Misto; 4 Apers; 5 Reeks

Mensapuzzle

Which number replaces the question mark and completes the puzzle?

Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

04 Average; 05 Good; 07 Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

		3				8		
	9						1	
1			9		4			3
	8	1	5	7	6	9	3	
			2		3			
	3	2	8	4	1	7	5	
6			4		2			9
	7						6	
		5				2		

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy = 2

3 4 8 9

Medium = 13

9 8 7 5

Hard = 28

2 7 9 3

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

Differences: 1. Arm is lower. 2. Boy is shorter. 3. Ball is missing. 4. Stripe is added to catcher's pants. 5. Bush is moved. 6. Glove is different.

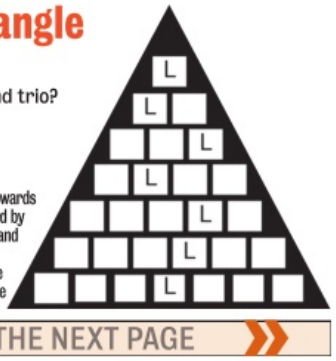
Riddler

At one time, the Canadian and US dollars were discounted by 10 cents on each side of the border (i.e., a Canadian dollar was worth 90 US cents in the US, and a US dollar was worth 90 Canadian cents in Canada). A man walks into a bar on the US side of the border, orders 10 US cents worth of beer, pays with a US dollar and receives a Canadian dollar in change. He then walks across the border to Canada, orders 10 Canadian cents worth of beer, pays with a Canadian dollar and receives a US dollar in change. He continues this throughout the day, and ends up drunk with the original dollar in his pocket. Who pays for the drinks?

Alpha triangle

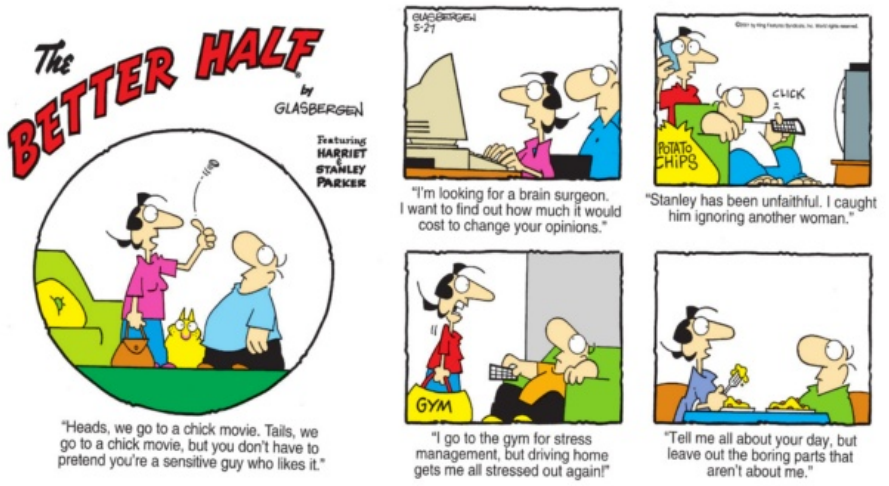
1 The 12th letter
2 Lutetium symbol
3 First of a dead-end trio?
4 Helpful hint
5 Male relative
6 Centres of atoms
7 Count in

Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.



DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE

COMICS


The BETTER HALF
by GLASBERGEN
Featuring HARRIET & STANLEY PARKER
"Heads, we go to a chick movie. Tails, we go to a chick movie, but you don't have to pretend you're a sensitive guy who likes it."
GLASBERGEN 5-27
"I'm looking for a brain surgeon. I want to find out how much it would cost to change your opinions."
CLICK
POTATO CHIPS
"Stanley has been unfaithful. I caught him ignoring another woman."
GYM
"I go to the gym for stress management, but driving home gets me all stressed out again!"
"Tell me all about your day, but leave out the boring parts that aren't about me."

PTOOM!
WE'RE GOING THE WRONG WAY!
LOOKS LIKE WE DON'T HAVE MUCH OF A CHOICE!
FLASH GORDON
BY JIM KEEFE
FLASH AND THORNE ARE PURSUED THROUGH A MYSTERIOUS CASTLE BY ITS MONSTROUS INHABITANTS!
UP HERE, QUICK! I THINK IT'S A WAY OUT!
ZZAAK!
THIS IS NOT GOOD.
WE CAN'T HOLD UP HERE FOR LONG. WE'RE RUNNING OUT OF AMMO!
LOOK! I CAN SEE OUR SHIP...
...AND A RESCUE SHIP FROM ARBORIA!
WATCH YOUR BACK! WE'VE GOT COMPANY!
WE HAVE TO FIND SOME WAY TO SIGNAL THAT SHIP!
PROOM!
THE REST OF THE AMMO...
HEADS UP!
IT'S TIME FOR SOME FIREWORKS!
KA-BOOM!
PROOM!
WHA..?!
NEXT: SURVIVORS..?
2-5

WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
Today brings happiness and productivity to work. Your efforts may earn appreciation from seniors, potentially leading to changes in your role, position, or responsibilities, such as a promotion. Hidden enemies or opponents may lose their influence. Singles and couples in love might make significant marriage decisions with support from friends or relatives.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
The challenges of recent days are now under control, and you are blessed by the Moon. You may resume delayed tasks and see the rewards of your hard work. Business gains could enhance your financial stability. Spending on art or literature might bring joy, and you may find peace through chanting mantras or meditation.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
Family matters may keep you occupied today. You could discover new income opportunities that improve your financial situation. Interests in art, movies, or glamour may boost your creativity. Lovebirds will gain clarity in their relationships, and students can focus on their career goals better.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
You may feel unwell today, which could impact your professional and domestic life. Concerns about your spouse's health might add to your worries. Patience is essential, and it's best to avoid new investments, as losses are possible. Students should stay focused on their studies and avoid distractions.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
You are blessed by the positive Moon today, bringing good health and resolution to old health issues. Financially, funds stuck in the past may be recovered. You might also consider applying for a loan to acquire luxury items.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
Dullness and laziness might affect your focus today, making you feel unmotivated. Health issues concerning your spouse or children could trouble you. Avoid making investments in assets. Lovebirds should steer clear of family-related arguments.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
Negative vibes might surround you today, causing dissatisfaction. Avoid investments in unnecessary assets, and do not rely heavily on friends for support, as they may not meet your expectations. Trust your intuition when making important decisions.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
With support from your subordinates, you can successfully implement business plans today. Social or family gatherings may help expand your network. Short business trips are likely and could bring benefits in the near future.

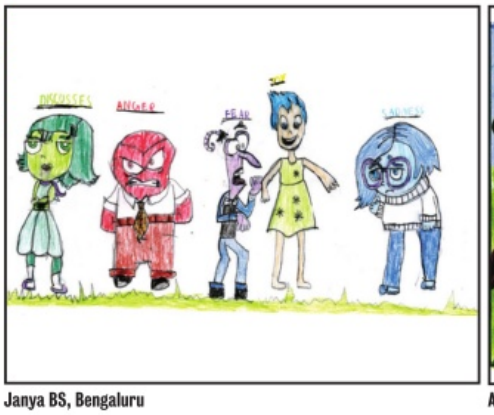
Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
Today looks favourable for your finances. Past investments may bring returns, and you might control unnecessary spending, leading to increased savings. Lovebirds should communicate politely to avoid conflicts.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
Blessed by the Moon, you'll feel energetic and enjoy your work today. Romantic moments with your spouse could improve family harmony. This is a good time to plan new projects, with your attention to detail aiding in creating effective strategies. Job seekers may find promising opportunities. Lovebirds should avoid trivial arguments.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
Disappointment may cloud your day, so it's important to control arrogance to prevent potential losses during conversations. Lovebirds should handle discussions carefully to avoid misunderstandings that could harm the relationship.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
Blessings from the Moon bring new sources of income. Past investments may yield profits, converting losses into gains and improving your financial health. Health issues affecting parents might see resolution, bringing relief.

KIDZONE



Janya BS, Bengaluru

Anushika KV, Bengaluru

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror, No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011;
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SOLUTIONS

RIDDLER The man paid for all the drinks. But, you say, he ended up with the same amount of money that he started with! However, as he transported Canadian dollars into Canada and US dollars into the US, he performed "economic work" by moving the currency to a location where it was in greater demand (and thus valued higher). The earnings from this work were spent on the drinks.

QUOTE UNCODE Happiness is holding someone in your arms and knowing you hold the whole world.

FAST FIVE

C	L	O	S	E
R	A	M	P	S
U	M	I	T	K
M	I	T	R	E
B	A	S	E	R

SOLVE IN 1M
2*(-8)*4-3*
(-2)*4
= -16*4-(-6)*4
= -64+24 = -40

STRIKE OUT

QUICK

MENSA PUZZLE
27. In each circle, multiply the top two numbers together, and divide by 2 for the left hand circle, 3 for the centre, and 4 for the right hand circle, putting the result in the lower segment.

BULL'S EYE
cone, CONQUER, corn, crone, once, ounce, rune

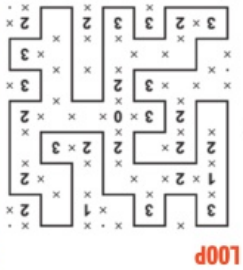
SUDOKU

3	4	5	2	9	6	7	8	1
2	7	9	1	3	8	4	6	5
6	1	8	4	5	2	3	7	9
9	3	2	8	4	1	7	5	6
7	5	6	2	9	3	1	4	8
4	8	1	5	7	6	9	3	2
1	6	7	9	8	4	5	2	3
8	9	4	3	2	5	6	1	7
5	2	3	6	1	7	8	9	4

ALPHA TRIANGLE
L, Lu, Gul, Clue, Uncle, Nuclei, Include.

GO FIGURE
Easy
Medium
9 - 8 - 3 + 4 = 2
5 + 9 + 7 - 8 = 13
Hard
9 x 2 + 3 + 7 = 28

LOOP



KAKURO

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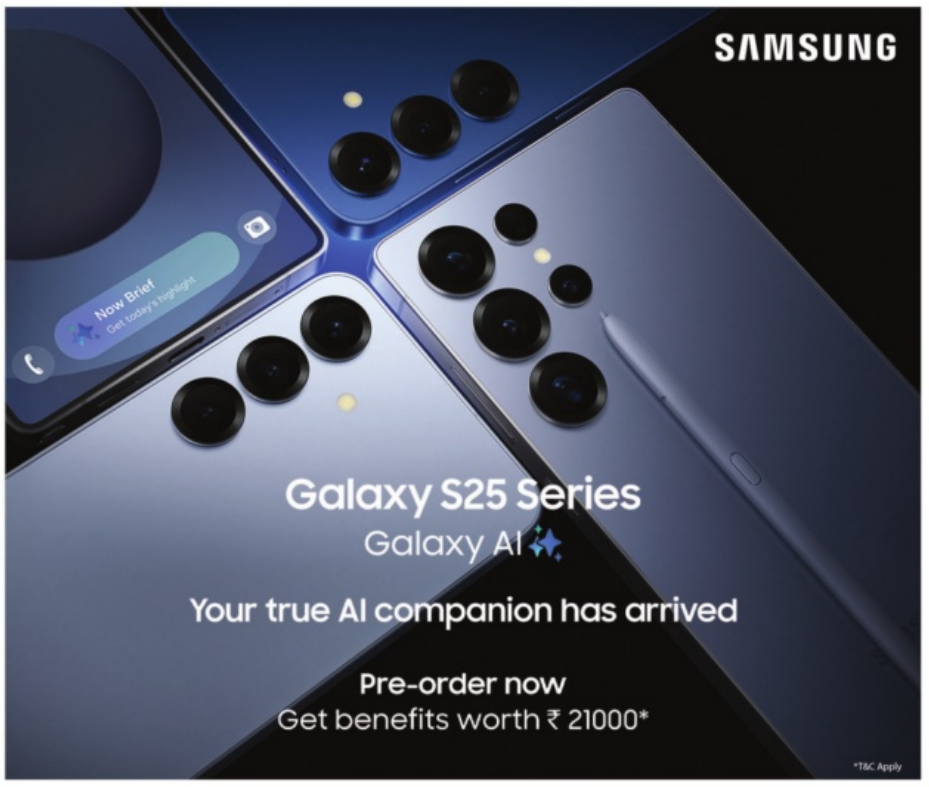

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